

Q&A – Chips JU 2023 Initiative Calls

1. For the DEP call, the guidelines ask to use the “Previous projects” field to upload a file that “should be the single complete proposal as submitted in the Call for Expression of Interest for the selection of a Hosting Consortium. The document should be uploaded as PDF file in the portal. This document is requested for completeness, but it will not be part of the Digital Europe evaluation that will be performed on the basis of Part A and Part B above described.”
The upload limit for this “previous projects” field is still 10Mb and that is too low
For the HEU call, the guidelines ask to use the “Appendix 2&4” field to upload a file that “should be the single complete proposal as submitted in the Call for Expression of Interest for the selection of a Hosting Consortium. The document should be uploaded as PDF file in the portal. This document is requested for completeness, but it will not be part of the Horizon Europe evaluation that will be performed on the basis of Part A and Part B above described.”
The upload limit for this “Appendix 2&4” field is still 10Mb and that is too low
→ The tab for the Part B can accept 50Mb, therefore please upload in the Part B of HE portal the Part B you prepared for HE and at the end of the document merge Part A and B of the full proposal but without letter of intents etc. Do the same for the DEP portal in the Part B upload the Part B of the DEP and merge at the end of the document the Part A and B of the full proposal.
2. According to document Q&A, Feb 21st, (2), „internal invoice can be taken into account in the calculation of the indirect costs both in DEP and HE.” The financial table in the DEP-call calculates correctly but for the financial table in the F&T-portal (HE) does not calculate like this – it excludes the internal invoice from the calculation of indirect costs.
→ After further checking it appears that indeed internal invoice costs are included in DEP and excluded in HE for the calculation of the indirect cost (remember that in DEP the indirect cost are 7% while in HE the indirect cost are 25%). We corrected the previous answers. Also the EXCEL spreadsheet CfEol.v2.xls contains for the Setup and Integration HE tab a formula for the calculation of the indirect cost that is wrong, please disregard.
3. What is the maximum size of documents to be uploaded?
→ Please note that the limits for the upload of documents have been increased to 50Mb in all portals
4. There seems to be page limits in the portals, how do we handle them?
→ Please do not take the page limits into account, we asked to correct the configuration. But as amply explained there is only ONE proposal to be submitted in the three portals (HE grant, DEP grant and CfEol) Do not submit three different proposals because of the (non existent) page limits.
5. What needs to be uploaded under the HE and DEP template? There is only 1 proposal but what about the tables with deliverables etc.? And how is this going to be evaluated?
→ Both programmes have some specific parts such as the Part A, the ethics, etc. those should be filled accordingly. Regarding the proposal template (Part B), those are slightly different from HE and DEP. As HE grant will cover the setup and integration costs while the DEP grant will cover the operational costs for access there is the valid questions what to write. Regarding the

text part please use (stick to) the text from the single proposal (copy /paste). There is no need to add text at all or to summarize some parts. Then both HE and DEP Part B templates contain tables for staff effort, milestones, deliverables, work packages, etc. Here we expect to see of course only those staff effort, milestone, work packages etc. that relate to the HE grant or DEP grant. In other words, the tables in the HE template should reflect the relevant information pertaining to the HE grant for setup and integration. For example, the table with deliverables should reflect what will be monitored under the HE grant and the work package table then justifies the costs that can be submitted under HE. Importantly though such tables should of course come from the single proposal where for examples work packages, deliverables, milestones, staff efforts are detailed.

- ➔ A possible question is then: what happens if for example a milestone in the HE grant depends on actions in the DEP grant or in some procurement? A short reference in the table to this action described in some other grant suffices and will not form a problem in the evaluation.
- ➔ Because for the evaluation, the experts will use the single proposal as a basis for the evaluation of the three components: procurement, HE grant for setup and integration and DEP grant for operational cost. So there is no risk of penalty if the Part B of one grant includes elements that pertain to the other grant or procurement.
- ➔ Later in preparing the grants one will need to be specific about what parts of the overall project are to be funded in one of the two grants to avoid any double funding. That is why it is recommended to already fill in the tables in the proposals accordingly (like one would do in a normal call) and as good as possible.

6. Table Estimated_Budget_EU_CfEol.v2.xls:

- a. Sheet "Total Cost of ownership": the Total Costs (Col. M) do only sum up "Operating cost grant (DEP)" + "Setup and integration (HE)". Should the Total Cost of sheet "Procurement" be included here?
 - ➔ The formulas are correct. There is for example no personnel cost in the procurement therefore this does not show up in the total cost sum.
- b. Sheet "Total Cost of ownership": the Total maximum funding (Col. Q) do only sum up "Operating cost grant (DEP)" + "Setup and integration (HE)". Should the Total maximum funding of sheet "Procurement" be included here?
 - ➔ See above
- c. With (5), the current Q&A-Documents describes: no indirect costs for "Internally invoiced services and goods" in the HE call. However, the current .xls-template shows for the DEP-Call a formula for indirect costs (field L10) including "D.2 Internally invoiced services and goods" in the calculation of the indirect costs, which is also according to AGA Article 6.2.E Indirect costs. Is it correct to include 7% indirect costs for "D.2 Internally invoiced services and goods" in the DEP call?

→ Contrary to what was claimed in a further question internal invoice can be taken into account in the calculation of the indirect costs both in DEP and HE.

7. Table National_Budget_Table_Template.xls for HE / DEP-call:
 - a. Concerning the tables to be uploaded in “other annexes” in the F&T-portal: shall these tables contain only the national parts of the HE-call or DEP-call respectively? Or is the overall sum (as uploaded with the CfEol) sufficient?
→ Unclear question, please reformulate.
8. Should the budget tables include all the full costs, including those to be covered through national/Member State funding, or just the 50% covered by the Commission and the Chips JU? The templates provided seem to suggest different approaches (e.g. the DEP template calls for including ‘50%’ of costs while the HE template for 100%). More specifically:
 - a. For Digital Europe Programme: the budget template on SEDIA states that the DEP’s funding is (as usual) 50%. Does this mean that the remaining 50% should be provided by the national contribution (for a total coverage of 100% of the opex costs), or does it mean that only 50% of Opex costs will be funded overall (DEP + national contribution)? In other words, if participant X has €100 of Opex, will they get funded for €50 or €100?
→ For 100 Euro eligible cost in the DEP Grant for Operation: 50 Euro will be paid through the EU grant and 50 Euro will be paid by the national authority.
 - b. In the HE template where the reimbursement rate is 100%, considering that 50% of the costs are covered by HE and 50% from the national country, in each item should we insert the total costs (where the column with the maximum allowable funding request will be the total cost) and then ask for 50% reimbursement, or should we insert 50% of the total cost, and then asking for the 100% of reimbursement.
→ See further question on the 100% maximum funding rate, The 100% funding rate is a maximum used to calculate the maximum funding, the applicant must fill in a requested funding.
9. Could you confirm that the only difference between “crucial” and non crucial equipment is the €500,000 price tag? Or is there a more functional difference (e.g. that the PL cannot run at all without a certain piece of equipment).
→ The 500kEuro is the defining amount for crucial equipment
10. Should all cost items be matched 50:50 from the Commission and national contribution? Or can we simply ensure that each budget source is matched 50:50 for each participant (i.e. for RTO x in Member State y 50% of their Procurement costs are covered by Member State y and the other 50% by the Commission, but individual equipment pieces are not).
→ The DEP Grant for operation should be 50/50. It is the overall amount that needs to be balanced (so DEP grant + HE grant + Procurement) should also balance to 50/50. It is preferable though to strive for 50/50 also for the procurement and the HE grant.
11. What is the disbursement approach to Horizon Europe vs. DEP funding? Is it disbursed all at once, or in instalments?
→ It will be based on the introduction of cost, there is some prefinancing that will be disbursed in instalments.

12. For operational costs, can these begin before the pilot line is fully operational? Or can they last longer than 5 years? (As they theoretically should enable access to the pilot lines).
- The operational cost covers the organization of the access and therefore they probably will be incurred in the beginning (e.g. development of the organization of access, software, logistics, etc.). The Hosting Agreement for the access is signed till 2031, therefore this grant could cover the whole period.
13. We know building costs are ineligible under the CEol. However, can rental costs for existing private buildings be included?
- No, this is not a direct cost.
14. There seems to be page limits in the portals, how do we handle them?
- Please do not take the page limits into account, we asked to correct the configuration. But as amply explained there is only ONE proposal to be submitted in the three portals (HE grant, DEP grant and CfEol) Do not submit three different proposals because of the (non existent) page limits.
15. Having learnt, that the JPA will cover only tenders with at least 500.000 Euro costs each the question is, how to handle crucial measurement equipment which is typically in the range 100.000 – 499.999 Euro each.
- This is answered in one of the questions below.
16. Is the cost limit as shown in the JPA template (500.000 Euro) already fixed or subject to negotiation?
- Not subject to negotiation.
17. Is there a possibility to put equipment with tenders below 500.000 Euro in the HE-call, cost category C2, with the exception "OPTION 6 for programmes with choice at call level, therein OPTION 2 full cost only (if selected for the call)", as shown in the AGA? The justification by the nature of the actions should be given.
- Equipment in HE should be introduced at depreciation, the other option is only for equipment that is no longer used after the end of the project.
18. Referring to the screen shot below (HE call, funding & tenders portal) : The table in the portal seems not to calculate indirect costs for "Internally invoiced services and goods" – this is a mistake?
- ~~There is no overhead for internally invoiced services and goods because those could already include some overhead so in order to avoid double counting.~~
 - **CORRECTION: Internally invoiced goods can be taken into account in calculating the indirect cost, provided the internally invoiced does not contain overhead and only in DEP not in HE**
19. The shown funding rate is 100% - this is a mistake?
- 100% is the maximum funding rate and is used to calculate the maximum that can be requested. The applicant will have to introduce the requested amount in the next column using the appropriate funding rate (eg 50%). Please refer to the guide for applicants
20. The cost categories "access to research infra." are new? What is the intention here?
- Please refer to the HE website
21. When are the answers be published on the website?

- They are published the next day after receiving the question
22. A short notification by email: “answer are now published on website [link] ...” would be nice, to avoid time consuming monitoring the websites
- Communication with the potential applicants is not allowed in order to be transparent and give any applicant the same information.
23. Can the costs for the equipment of less than 500k be taken into account?
- Yes. The 500k limit must be understood as to establish a list of a minimum of equipment that is to be taken into consideration for ownership. Equipment of lower value can be included in the Joint Procurement eventually (but that means the extra overhead involving the JU Office in the procurement procedure) or else under the HE setup and integration grant and so according to the rules of HE, for example at depreciation value.
24. Is the threshold for crucial equipment per single piece of equipment or per equipment system?
- per equipment system
25. What about the retroactive equipment?
- Those are in up taken in the list of crucial equipment although the procurement procedure is run by the RTO and the cost are completely covered by the national authority, they can be taken into account in the 50%-50% coverage of the total cost of the pilot line.
26. How to take into account the procurement overheads? The cost for organizing and managing the procurement procedure?
- The joint procurement cannot include cost for the procurement overheads but only cost for the procurement of the equipment. The DEP Operation grant is meant for organizing the access and is not meant to cover the cost of the administration of the procurement. One can distinguish two types of cost for such action: the ones that have to do with the writing of the tender in particular the specifications as well as the evaluation of the offers, that can arguably be counted as part of the setup and integration cost, indeed it is part of the innovation of the pilot line to pick out the right equipment. Then there is the administration like publishing the tender, recaptioning the offers, etc. that would be part of the indirect cost of the HE setup and integration cost
27. Regarding the Mandate letter to be joined to the proposal for the Call for Expression of Interest, we have a question regarding the footnote at the end of the letter: “*Original mandate letters to be submitted with the application and annexed to the agreement – second original to be kept by the coordinator.*”
- We believe this footnote relates to the initial submission process that was envisaged, which was to provide 3 paper versions of the full proposal (either sent by postal mail or delivered in person). However, the procedure is now fully electronic through the CHIPS JU portal for the Expression of Interest and the SEDIA portal of the Commission for Horizon Europe and Digital Europe calls.
- Because the whole submission process is online, we plan to collect Mandate letters (Annex 1b) in a digital format with an electronic signature (or scan copy of document with handwritten signature) as suggested for Annex 1a (Declaration on honour).

→ We confirm that the letters of intent can be submitted digitally as pdfs with electronic signature or handwritten

28. Can you let me know if Switzerland is eligible in the current format?

→ No

29. I would like to know how to participate in the R&D calls within the Pilot lines calls. The calls seem to open on Feb 6th and to close on Feb 29th: how are they linked to the Pilot calls? This is not clear to me reading the Appendix 2 to the WP.xxx

→ You cannot participate to just the R&D calls they are integrated with the other calls that make the pilot line calls.

30. I have some questions about the criteria of the applicants on the call for Wide Bandgap semiconductors:

- Is there a requirement for the formal structure of the applicant, can for example a limited liability company (ownership of 50% university and 50% a public legal entity) be an applicant?

→ This should be possible

- If this is possible, can you tell me if there are some further requirements for a company such as this? (for example, will financial guarantees be required?)

→ That company must of course also get matching financing from the national authority and be eligible under HE and the DEP programme.

- Relating to the previous questions, where can I find more information on the call?

→ You can find all the Calls information in our website <https://www.chips-ju.europa.eu/>

31. In connection with the call which is being conducted as part of the Chips for Europe Initiative for the task *Pilot line 3: Pilot line on advanced Packaging and heterogeneous integration*, I would like to ask if you know consortiums that are planning to submit an application for financing and can you share their contact details?

→ Unfortunately, we are not aware of the consortium under preparation.

32. Please allow me to ask a few questions concerning the financial tables which are mandatory for our application:

→ The table under CfEol has been adapted and renamed as Estimated_Budget_EU_CfEol_v15fev to clarify what is expected. This table contains three tabs: one for the operational grant (DEP), one for the setup and integration grant (HE) and one for the procurement of equipment. Finally a last tab is the sum of the three preceding tabs. Of course to be consistent the table in the DEP-tab must also be included in the DEP call and for the table under the HE-tab is to be included in the HE call.

→ Regarding the national funding tables the three calls contain a similar table that need to be filled in with the requested national grant per action (DEP grant, HE grant, procurement).

- **Estimated Budget EU CfEol:**

Col B (Pers. Costs): is it needed to distinguish between persons for installing investments (connected to "CAPEX", thus DEP → 7% flat rate for indirect costs) and for other work (connected to "OPEX", thus HE → 25% flat rate for indirect costs) (see also my question concerning Col. L)

- As there are now two tabs one for HE and one for DEP it is now clear how to handle the indirect cost
- There is no personnel cost in the procurement tab. Costs related to the organization of the procurement procedure is explained in the answers of a preceding question.

Col. G (C2 Equip.): is this the right place for the investments? Where to list the retroactive equipment?

- Yes. In the tab for procurements

Col. K (D3 other costs): is this the right place for the investments? No

Where to list the retroactive equipment? No

What is the meaning of "PAC grant"? Not of application for those calls

Col. L (flat rate): from previous information I assume: flat rate HE-related costs = 25% (except for subcontr.) and flat rate for DEP-related costs = 7%. How to put both different flat rates in one field? The formula in L10 shows a division by d3?

- The DEP costs and HE costs belong under two different tabs in the EXCEL table.

Overall, it would be very helpful to have an example of the table filled with a theoretical but realistic case of the three interrelated calls for one pilot line consortium (CfEol, HE & DEP), showing, where to allocate which part of the costs ("OPEX", "CAPEX"; "retroactive equip.")

- **National budgets table:**

Col D: is the information about membership in the industry ass. mandatory?

- No

Col E: The "Direct Personnel Costs" (A) are assumed to be identical to "Personnel Costs" A. in the EU budget table, correct?

- Yes, but for the procurement there is no personnel cost

Col F: Are the investments to be listed under (B)? Is this the right col. to list the costs for retroactive equipment?

- Yes

Col. J: Does the Project Coordinator have to fill in the national Reimbursement Rates (all countries)?

- Yes, to be provided by the other members.

33. A non profit research centre, not a member of any of the three founding associations Aenas, Inside or Eposs, could still participate in Chips calls?

- Being member of one of the industrial associations is never a requirement to participate to Chips JU calls.
34. We have noticed that a separate Part B must be created for each of the above-mentioned interrelated calls. We wonder if the page limit stated is correct or if it is more of a technical limitation?
- There is only one proposal, therefore only one part B. The same text for that proposal must be submitted in each of the three calls. There is no page limit.
35. I would like to ask you if you have a list of National Contact Points to help clarify the national cofinancing arrangements. Could you provide me with such a list?
- Please provide us the country that you need.
36. Is the Joint Procurement only to be put in the CfEol, but not to be shown in the DIGITAL-Chips-2024-SG-CPL-3?
- There is only one proposal, that proposal must be submitted identically to the three portals.
- What are the minimum/maximum values for the three calls, especially the Operational_ DIGITAL-Chips-2024-SG-CPL-3?
 - There are only maximum values, please refer to the call text. Each call has an indicative amount and a maximum amount. There is also a maximum amount for the total. Some figures for the initiatives calls 2023 were missing in the WP but that has been corrected.
 - The Operational costs shown in the application may exceed the end of the project 2027? Meaning: Costs forecasted for 2028, 2029 might be funded here?
 - The hosting agreement is till 2031, therefore the access must be guaranteed till 2031.
 - Is it mandatory for all legal partners to show Operational Costs to underline their activities?
 - All hosting entities shall provide access to their part of the pilot line.
 - Thus, the Excel-file Estimated Budget EU CfEol simply sums up the values of what is shown in the part A of the two calls HORIZON and DIGITAL, plus the Joint Procurement (this with 7% flat rate)?
 - Please refer to the improved Total Cost of Ownership table, there is one tab for each action and a total.
 - National Budget Table: As there are questions about memberships AENEAS etc : do we have to expect AENEAS-“fees”?
 - The question is not clear. Joining any of the associations is on a free basis.
37. I have some questions about the submission process for the Pilot Lines proposal:

Digital Europe - CALL FOR PROPOSALS (CFP) FOR OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE PILOT LINE (DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME)

- **Part A:** should we reference all partners as part of the Pilot Line consortium or only the partners that have budget on this call?
 - All partners, there is only one consortium. It seems to be expected that all partners because they must provide access to their facilities as part of the pilot line therefore would have some operational costs.
- I believe that for the sake of consistency it would be preferable to have the complete consortium declared in the Part A, but I recall that in some cases it is not possible to submit a proposal with a partner having zero budget on the call.
- **Previous projects Annex:** it is asked in the instructions to use this field to upload *“the single complete proposal as submitted in the Call for Expression of Interest for the selection of a Hosting Consortium. The document should be uploaded as PDF file in the portal”*. This brings 2 questions:
 - In the call for expression of interest, we should *“submit the proposal in six (6) parts compressed in a unique Zip file (*.zip)”* → is it this zip file that is expected to be unloaded in this field *“previous projects Annex”* or should we upload only the single pdf file for **“Part A, Part B, Total Cost of Ownership”** ?
 - There is a one PDF consisting of the part A and B. Then there are the different EXCEL files (Estimated Budget, National Budget for _DEP, _HE, _Procurement) to be submitted under the CfEol call (template is to be found under the call documents for the CfEol), then there are all the other documents such as the letters of the national authorities, etc. All those need to be zipped and uploaded.
 - The maximum size for the file is 10Mb and there is a possibility that the file with complete proposal exceeds this size. Is there any possibility to change this limitation about the size of the file to be uploaded?
 - Thanks for pointing this out we will check and make sure that you can upload your documents.

Horizon Europe - CALL FOR PROPOSALS (CFP) FOR SET-UP, INTEGRATION AND PROCESS DEVELOPMENT (HORIZON EUROPE PROGRAMME)

- **Part B:** there is a limitation to 45 pages for this part B in Horizon Europe calls. Considering the ambition of the Pilot Lines projects, this limitation seems to be quite challenging and will lead to extreme summarizing of the contents of the proposal for this call which shall include all R&D&I activities. Is there any possibility to increase the 45 pages limit?
 - There is no page limit for this call, nor in HE or DEP. There is only one proposal that needs to be uploaded three times.
- **Complete proposal:** it is asked in the instructions to use this field to upload *“the single complete proposal as submitted in the Call for Expression of Interest for the selection of a Hosting Consortium. The document should be uploaded as PDF file in the portal”*. This brings the same 2 questions as for the Digital Europe call: [See preceding answer](#)
- In the call for expression of interest, we should *“submit the proposal in six (6) parts compressed in a unique Zip file (*.zip)”* → is it this zip file that is expected to be unloaded in this field *“previous projects Annex”* or should we upload only the single pdf file for **“Part A, Part B, Total Cost of Ownership”** ? [See preceding answer](#)

- The maximum size for the file is 10Mb and there is a possibility that the file with complete proposal exceeds this size. Is there any possibility to change this limitation about the size of the file to be uploaded? [See preceding answer](#)

38. I have following question: How does the combining funding work for Chips JU, especially the national funding?

→ [Can you be more precise?](#)

39. Can I ask you if the personal costs for the procurement (contacts with the suppliers, tender realisation, ...) can be introduced in the JU costs? This activity with different systems will take a lot of man months.

→ [Some of the activities can be introduced in the setup and integration, like writing the specs and evaluating the proposals. The rest of the costs cannot be covered.](#)